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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed data from the Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System concerning attendance and graduation patterns of two groups: students who entered Illinois public universities as first-time freshmen between 1987 and 1992 and students who had graduated from Illinois public universities by spring 1998. Major findings included: (1) the number of minority first-time students and minority persistence both increased; (2) about 26 percent of first-time students graduated in four years; after six years, 56 percent had graduated; (3) about 9 percent of students were still enrolled six years after entering as freshmen; (4) six-year graduation rates for minority students were substantially lower than those of all students, but their graduation rates improved over longer periods; (5) 1998 graduates enrolled about 12 terms before graduating; (6) graduation and persistence rates for the 1992 freshman class were lower than those for the 1987 class; and (7) although having larger numbers of part-time students increased an institution's overall time-to-degree rate, the size of this effect was not clear. Tables provide detailed data on graduation and persistence of all students, and of black and Hispanic students specifically; pathways and time-to-degree of graduates; and changes in graduation and persistence rates between 1987 and 1992 freshmen classes. (DB)

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Item #12
June 8, 1999

STATE OF ILLINOIS
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PERSISTENCE, GRADUATION, AND TIME-TO-DEGREE

ED 431 349

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HE 032 112

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Item #12
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STATE OF ILLINOIS
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PERSISTENCE, GRADUATION, AND TIME-TO-DEGREE

This report analyzes data from the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System about the attendance and graduation patterns of two groups: students who entered Illinois public universities as first-time freshmen between 1987 and 1992 and students who graduated from public universities by spring 1998. The Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System was developed by the 48 Illinois community colleges and nine public universities and contains data for all undergraduate students enrolled from summer 1982 through the present. Independent Illinois colleges and universities do not currently contribute to the system and data are not available from out-of-state institutions. Therefore, students transferring to independent or out-of-state institutions appear as "drop outs" from public higher education even if they successfully completed a degree elsewhere. Illinois independent institutions also cannot track students who transfer to the public sector or to other private institutions.

This report provides a snapshot of two time periods in Illinois higher education and examines many of the factors that influence persistence, degree completion, and time-to-degree. The issues are complex with a large number of variables, and it is not always possible to prove causal relationships between emerging trends and institutional behavior. It is important to make a clear differentiation between institutional behavior—which can be monitored and adjusted to fit the institutional and state education goals—and student behavior. Student behavior can be monitored and discussed; however, modification is difficult. Some variables related to student behavior reflect changing national norms over which institutions have no control such as an increasing trend toward earlier full-time employment, the pursuit of educational objectives on a part-time basis, and a low unemployment rate nationally. It is imperative to note that the available data, while accurate and valid, have specific limitations in this respect.

While the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System does not currently include private institutions, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Graduation Rate Survey, introduced in 1997, does include private institutions. This survey started with first year, full-time students enrolled in universities in 1991. It analyzes students who graduate in four, five, and six-year cohorts. Although Board staff has compiled data for Illinois public universities[1] based on the Graduation Rate Survey, these data report only aggregate information and are unable to address student enrollment patterns between institutions. Since the survey is not fully implemented and is not required of all institutions until 2002, the data are somewhat incomplete. While it is expected that these data will ultimately correlate with graduation rates reported for public institutions and present completion data for privates which are not reported in the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System, the Graduation Rate Survey will not solve the problem of identifying where students go if they leave the public sector. A future report will present this information and report on the two six-year cohorts first enrolling in 1991 and 1992.

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[1] Governors State University and the University of Illinois at Springfield are not required to complete the Graduation Rate Survey since they enroll no freshmen. Community colleges submit a separate Graduate Rate Survey designed for two year institutions.

While specific data may be used to monitor trends and provide persistence measures, it is important that the limitations of this particular data set be fully understood. The most notable limitations are:

- The data include information on public universities and community colleges only.
- Students who leave public education and attend private or out-of-state institutions are reported as "drop outs" when, in fact, they may eventually complete a bachelor's degree elsewhere.
- The data are longitudinal and report on two six-year periods starting in 1987 and 1992. Statistics will not be available to allow another direct comparison of these cohorts to assess long-term trends until the end of the next six-year period (2002).
- There are not precise measures of part-time students before 1993. The data used for this report are not capable of differentiating between a part-time student who takes nine credits and a part-time student who takes three credits per semester or quarter. A part-time student is defined as any student who takes less than 12 credits per academic term.

With these limitations in mind, significant findings regarding the attendance and graduation patterns of students who entered public institutions as first-time freshmen between 1987 and 1992 and students who graduated in 1998 are:

- The number of minority first-time students increased, and minority persistence increased over an extended period.
- About 26 percent of students in the 1987 to 1992 public university freshman classes graduated in four years. After five years, 48 percent had graduated, and 56 percent had graduated by the end of six years.
- About nine percent of the classes of 1987 to 1992 were still enrolled six years after they entered as freshmen. Sixty-one percent of the public university freshmen included in this study eventually graduated (in seven to ten years depending on entry year of the cohort).
- Six-year graduation rates for minority students were substantially below those of all students but their graduation rates improved over longer periods. The rate for Black students climbed from 29 percent at the six-year point to 38 percent in seven to ten years, and the Hispanic graduation rate increased from 39 to 48 percent in the longer time period[2].
- On average, 1998 public university graduates enrolled in about 12 terms[3] before graduating.
- Graduation and persistence rates for the 1992 freshman class were lower than the rates for the 1987 class.
- While it is clear that larger numbers of part-time students in proportion to full-time students increases overall time-to-degree rates, it is not clear to what extent this is the case.

Persistence and Graduation at Public Universities

Each fall between 1987 and 1992, 22,000 to 25,000 new freshmen entered Illinois public universities, a total of over 140,000 new students. Consistent with trends in the number of high

[2] Note that the data for the 1987 cohort allows a 10year "look" at long term persistence and completion rates; however, after ten years, the number of students persisting is insignificant. The 1992 cohort reports for only years, and it is expected that these percentages will increase as this group of students are tracked over a ten-year period.

[3] Terms refers to semesters, quarters, or summers.

school graduates, the number of freshmen declined about 12 percent during this period. Freshmen entering public universities annually represented about 25 percent of all new freshmen in Illinois.

Table 1 (Tables 1-5 are located at the conclusion of the report) shows that slightly over 61 percent of the students who entered public universities as freshmen between 1987 and 1992 had received a bachelor's degree by 1998. About one-fourth of the students graduated in four years, assumed to be the traditional length of time for completion of a degree[4]. By the end of five years, substantially more (48 percent) had graduated and by the end of six years, about 56 percent had received their baccalaureate degree. There was a downward trend in the percent of each class of freshmen completing their degrees in four, five, or six years. For example, the four-year completion rate for the 1992 freshman class was about 24 percent, three points below the rate for the 1987 class.

Table 1 also shows that about 9 percent of all freshmen continued in their studies and were still enrolled after six years. More than 64 percent of new fall freshmen entering public universities either received a baccalaureate degree or persisted at a public university six years following first enrollment. However, the combined graduation and persistence rate declined from about 66 percent for the 1987 freshman class to 61 percent for the 1991 freshmen class.

Tables 2 and 3 provide degree completion and persistence data for Black and Hispanic students who were members of the freshman classes from fall 1987 through fall 1992. At the end of six years, 29 percent of Black and 39 percent of Hispanic freshmen had completed baccalaureate degrees. Degree completion rates for Black students were slightly over half of the rate for all students and, for Hispanic students, slightly more than two-thirds. However, Black and Hispanic students tended to persist in college, and graduation rates improved beyond six years. While nine percent of all students were still enrolled at the end of six years following first enrollment, over 16 percent of Black freshmen and over 15 percent of Hispanic freshmen remained enrolled. Although never reaching the level for all students, the graduation rates rose to 38 percent for Black students and 48 percent for Hispanic students in the seven to ten year time period. Tables 1, 2, and 3 indicate that at the end of six years 36 percent of all first-time public university freshmen, 55 percent of Black freshmen, and 46 percent of Hispanic freshmen had not graduated and were no longer enrolled at a public university in Illinois. The data used in these analyses do not track students who leave public universities and transfer to community colleges or independent institutions.

Overall Time-to-Degree and Persistence Trends
(1987 to 1998)

- 25.6% graduated in 4 years,
  48.4 % in five years,
  55.8% in six years, and
  61.5% beyond six years.
- Four-year graduation rates declined for each successive freshman class from 1988 to 1992 dropping by three percent.

[4] It is important to understand that the average number of terms for graduation among students attending public universities and graduating in six years or less is equal to 8.64 terms. This number of terms is possible to attain in four to four and one half years. The number of graduates reported correlate to the summer-fall-spring semesters normally associated with an academic year and do not include the summer following the fourth year. If the cohort was adjusted to include the summer following the fourth year, four-year (actually four years and three months) graduation rates would increase 5.26 percent in 1987 and 3.88 percent in 1992. Depending on how the year is defined, four-year graduation rates vary by three to six percent among public universities. If the "year" is defined as described, then persistence rates in years 7 through 12 would similarly decrease by the summer graduation rate.

Time-to-Degree

While the persistence and graduation data are based on entering public university cohort groups, the time-to-degree analyses are based on an exiting cohort group. The Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System contains data for 28,000 students who received a bachelor's degree from a public university during fiscal year 1998. These students pursued three major pathways to their degrees: community college to university transfer, universities only (may have attended more than one), and university to community college to university transfer. Table 4 examines these pathways and provides information about two groups: 1998 graduates who completed their degrees in six or fewer years, and those who required more than six years. Rather than focusing on years to degree, this analysis looks at the number of terms in which students enrolled prior to obtaining a degree, regardless of time.

Minority Time-to-Degree and Persistence Trends
(1987 to 1998)

- Graduation rates for Black and Hispanic students are substantially lower than the rates for all students.
- Persistence beyond six years is high among Black (16%) and Hispanic (15%) students.
- Graduation rates for Black and Hispanic students increased over longer periods of time to 38.4% and 47.7%, respectively.
- Minority first time enrollments are higher among Black (20%) and Hispanic (58%) students from the 1987 to the 1992 cohort.

Table 4 shows the three higher education paths graduates followed that may be examined with these data. The 11,750 students who first entered an Illinois community college and then transferred to a public university to complete their degrees comprised the largest group, representing 42 percent of all fiscal year 1998 graduates. Other graduates included 9,487 students (33 percent) who first enrolled at a public university and remained at that or another public university, and 6,898 students (24 percent) who first enrolled at a public university, transferred to a public community college, and transferred back to a public university to complete the degree. This last group includes students who are continuously enrolled at a public university but enrolled in a community college during the summer. Not shown are data for a small group of students who first enrolled simultaneously at a community college and a university.

Table 4 also shows that students who required more than six years to complete their baccalaureate degrees were more likely to have changed academic programs at either the community college or the university or both, depending on the path they took to obtain a bachelor's degree. Stopping out (leaving higher education for one or more terms) does not appear to explain the longer time-to-degree since the average number of terms of enrollment would be the same for graduates starting at community colleges and at universities. The more likely explanation is that students who required more than six years to complete their degree were part-time students and did not take a full course load each term. They likely enrolled in more terms and may have taken fewer courses each term.

On average, students who entered a university directly enrolled in about eight and a half terms, the fewest number of terms among the three pathways, but still more than the traditional eight terms long considered to be the norm. Community college transfer students enrolled in almost five more terms to complete their four-year degrees. Since a majority of community

college students attend on a part-time basis[5], this finding is not unexpected. The most notable finding about students who took more than six years to graduate is the high number of changes in major at both community colleges and universities attended. It is possible that students are "sampling" courses and fields before deciding on a major, resulting in a longer time to completion. Another possible explanation is that the students are succeeding in accomplishing personal goals and obtaining just-in-time training or education to fulfill particular needs. In any case, data show changing majors correlates positively to ultimate completion of the baccalaureate degree, but does not correlate to shorter time-to-degree.

Differences Among Public Universities

Each of the Illinois public universities has a unique mission and serves a particular population. Some serve primarily traditional, college-aged, residential students who are likely to attend full-time and, therefore, are more likely to complete their degrees in the traditional four-year period. Others serve primarily older students, commuters, and part-time students who are more likely to be employed and have family demands competing for their time and are less likely to attend full-time. The percent of part-time students is a useful indicator of the types of students served by universities. Public universities vary widely in the percent of part-time undergraduate students.

Percentage of Part-time Students by Institution

(All 1992 students)

Freshmen Classes	Part-time
Northeastern Illinois	47%
Chicago State	37%
SIU at Edwardsville	24%
U of I at Chicago	19%
Western Illinois	14%
SIU at Carbondale	12%
Illinois State	11%
Northern Illinois	11%
Eastern Illinois	9%
U of I at Urbana-Champaign	9%
Average	16%

Source: 1992 Fall Enrollment Survey

Table 5 shows that public universities vary widely in graduation rates and the time their students require to complete degrees. However, universities with similar proportions of part-time students tend to have similar persistence and graduation rates. High percentages of the students attending Chicago State University and Northeastern Illinois University, for example, are part-time. Graduation and persistence rates are lower and time-to-degree higher for these institutions. In contrast, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Eastern Illinois University serve largely full-time students and show higher completion rates and shorter time-to-degree. Although this comparison is valid, it does not take into account the level of academic preparation possessed by incoming students, which would clearly be another variable. It is expected that institutions with more rigorous admission requirements (higher ACT, higher ranking in high school class, etc.) accept students who are better prepared for higher education, another factor that affects time-to-degree.

Seven to Ten Year Completion Rates by University

Freshmen Class	Graduated Eventually
U of I at U-C	84.3%
Eastern Illinois	68.5%
Illinois State	64.8%
Northern Illinois	61.1%
Western Illinois	55.9%
SIU at Carbondale	52.2%
U of I at Chicago	46.1%
SIU at Edwardsville	44.6%
Northeastern Illinois	25.0%
Chicago State	22.4%
Average	61.5%

(Excerpt from Table 5)

In general, graduation rates for all public universities declined between freshman classes of 1987 and 1992 as shown in Table 5. Overall, universities showed declines in graduation and persistence

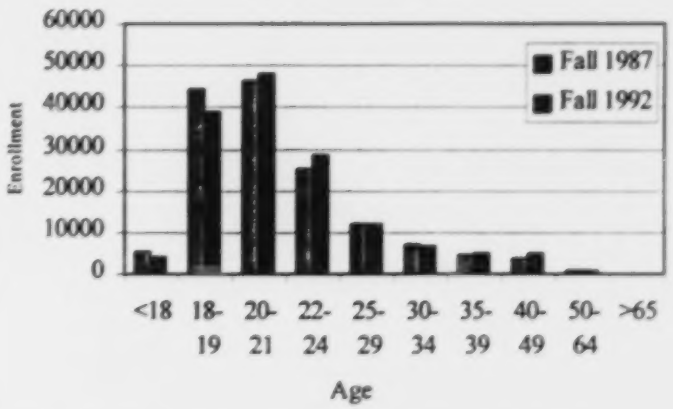
[5] Although this is true for all community college students, community college students who are in programs with the intent of transferring to a four-year institution tend to be younger and attend on a full-time basis.

rates, but the size of the decline varied. Since rates declined at eight of ten institutions, the factors causing the decline in graduation rates may be external, such as a healthy economy and low unemployment, and not institutional. Both the Carbondale and Edwardsville campuses of Southern Illinois University experienced the largest declines in the percent of students graduating within six years and the percent of students continuing after the sixth year, while graduation rates at Eastern Illinois University and Western Illinois University were either stable or increased slightly. Both Eastern Illinois University and Western Illinois University have placed priority on improving graduation rates and reducing time-to-degree and collaborated in a three-year study of causes delaying time-to-degree and strategies to improve timely degree completion.

Conclusions and Implications

The issues of time-to-degree, completion, and persistence are complex, with many factors that affect each area. These data indicate that there are fewer students finishing their degree programs in less than six years but more students who continue past the initial six-year period. Chart 1 shows the age distribution of freshmen students in 1987 and 1992. It is clear that the freshmen are somewhat older than the traditional 17-18 year old high school graduate, with fewer students between the ages of 17-19 and a larger percentage of students who are 20-24 years old in the 1992 class. Students between the ages of 35-49 also showed an increase over the 1987 class. This reflects changing demographics and student behavior of attending college or university at a later age and for a longer time.

Chart 1
Age Distribution



It also is possible that increased minority student participation, with traditionally longer time-to-degree, may contribute to the trend. The data from the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System indicate that, there appears to be a trade off between graduation rates and time-to-degree.

Previous studies of persistence, graduation, and time-to-degree suggested a slight upward trend in graduation rates for the freshman classes entering public universities. Although more students eventually graduated, the time-to-degree increased gradually for each successive class. The data provided in this report indicate that the earlier trend has reversed and graduation rates declined slightly. Both the increases of the mid-1980s and the declines of the late-1980s and early 1990s are small in magnitude with five percentage points or less separating the highest and lowest. If the longer time-to-degree is reflective of a changing mix of students with changing individual goals, it may be that attainment will continue to increase, but over a longer time period than traditionally expected. Goals for higher education may need to be adjusted accordingly to emphasize completion over time-to-degree.

Many of the factors that affect persistence, graduation, and time-to-degree are not under the control of the higher education community. Nationally, college enrollment rates for recent

high school graduates increased substantially during the 1980s. In 1980, for example, 49 percent of recent high school graduates entered college; by 1990, almost 60 percent went to college.[6] The higher college enrollment rates were reflected in increases in educational attainment at the college level during the 1990s but the increases were not as large. The percent of the 25 to 34-year old population that completed a bachelor's or higher degree increased from 23.2 percent in 1992 to 27.5 percent in 1998. Similarly, the proportion of this population who completed "some college" increased from 25.6 percent to 28.5 percent during the same period.[7] These trends can be expected to continue as college participation rates continued to increase during the 1990s, reaching 67 percent in 1997.

It is reasonable to assume that in the 1990s higher education is attracting students with more diverse educational objectives. For example, more than half of fiscal year 1998 students taking for-credit courses and attending Illinois community colleges reported that they were not pursuing a degree and intended to complete one or more courses only. A majority who leave community colleges without a degree report that they achieved their educational objectives nonetheless.[8] While university students are probably more likely to pursue a degree, this objective may not be as prevalent as in the past, and some students who leave a university without obtaining a degree may have achieved their objectives. The health of the economy and low unemployment during the 1990s may have contributed to changes in student objectives, persistence and graduation patterns. Young people have viable options beyond staying in school and have been able to obtain jobs without completing degrees, a trend that changes as the economy changes.

Although considerable progress was made during the late 1980s and early 1990s in improving high school preparation for college, much of this improvement occurred after the freshman classes examined in this report entered college. Increasing numbers of entering students need remedial coursework, slowing progress toward a degree. These factors may be affecting the decrease in graduation rates and time-to-degree.

In addition to demographic and economic trends, persistence, graduation, and time-to-degree are influenced by the decisions that students make for themselves: high school courses taken in preparation for college, part-time or full-time attendance and course load, and initial major selection and changes of major. This study showed that frequent changes of major were a significant characteristic of students who took more than six years to graduate but that it is also a significant indicator of students who eventually graduate, albeit over a longer period of time. One of the goals of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) is to provide students information to help them better plan their education. The IAI website is designed especially to help students who are undecided about their goals when they start college to select those courses that will enable them to keep their options open. The General Education Core Curriculum provides flexibility of choice in courses when the student's major and destination is unknown, and the recommendations for lower-division courses in each major provide the essentials when the student's school destination is undetermined.

Colleges and universities can affect students' academic progress by the availability and scheduling of courses, tuition and financial aid policies, academic monitoring and advising, and the transferability of courses. Western Illinois University and Eastern Illinois University have

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[6] Thomas G. Mortenson, "College Continuation Rates for 1997 High School Graduates," *Postsecondary Education Opportunity*, Number 71, May 1998.

[7] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Table A-1. "Years of School Completed by People 25 Years Old and Over, by Age and Sex: Selected Years 1940 to 1998." Internet Release Date: December 10, 1998.

[8] Illinois Community College Board, *Student Enrollments and Completions in the Illinois Community College System Fiscal Year 1998*; and *Illinois Community College System Former/Nonreturning Student Survey*, January 22, 1999.

placed high priority on improving graduation rates, and the data presented in Table 5 suggest that these efforts had positive results. Other institutions also are increasing efforts in these areas. Strategies to improve persistence and graduation rates and to reduce time-to-degree include improved advising, providing adequate sections of high demand courses, maintaining reasonable limits on credit hour requirements, monitoring students' progress and assisting students in monitoring their own progress, increasing faculty-student interaction, and providing incentives removing disincentives for taking a full course-load, expanding summer offerings, and more flexible class schedules and academic calendars.

The fact that increasing proportions of high school graduates are attracted to higher education is a positive trend. It represents the main step in increasing educational attainment beyond high school. Increasing minority participation in higher education is also a positive trend. While it is not possible, or desirable, to return to the traditional four-year model for a bachelor's degree for all students, many could complete their studies in a shorter period of time if assistance and incentives were available. Most institutions, whether they serve primarily traditional or non-traditional students, can select goals and strategies that will contribute to the statewide goals of improving completion rates and lowering time-to-degree.

An important issue is that there appears to be a trade off between graduation rates and time-to-degree. These data indicate that the percentage of Illinois students completing their academic programs remains stable, albeit taking a longer time period in which to do so. Further, the data indicate that students who change their majors have higher overall graduation rates than students who do not change their majors. While changing majors impedes time-to-degree, it may also be an indication that these students are committed to completion.

Clearly, institutions can decrease time-to-degree through a variety of ways such as making it more difficult for students to change majors or creating disincentives to part time enrollment. It is likely that such measures, while improving time-to-degree, would have a negative effect on the number of students who ultimately complete degrees. This relationship between time-to-degree and completions likely reflects changing student goals and attendance patterns, a strong economy, and the fact that institutions are working to retain and accommodate increasing numbers of non-traditional students. The trend toward increased dual high school and higher education enrollment shows promise as a mechanism for decreasing time-to-degree.

Because of the complexity of these issues, the staff will sponsor and participate in a future conference to share time-to-degree, completion, persistence information, and best practices among all Illinois institutions. Board staff also will continue to explore the expansion of the Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System to include data from all Illinois colleges and universities, including independent institutions. Board staff also is currently working to determine appropriate data elements to assess progress toward the goals identified in *The Illinois Commitment.*

Table 1

Graduation and Persistence of Public Universities' 1987 to 1992 Freshmen Classes

Freshman Class[1]		Bachelor's Degree Awarded[2] by the End of			Continuing After			No Degree & Not Enrolled	Graduated
Year	Number	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	After 6 Years	Eventually[3]
1987	24,646	26.8%	50.2%	56.4%	43.4%	17.3%	9.4%	34.2%	62.1%
1988	24,076	28.1%	50.5%	57.5%	43.1%	17.9%	9.1%	33.4%	63.0%
1989	23,895	25.4%	48.4%	55.9%	44.5%	18.4%	8.9%	35.2%	60.9%
1990	23,467	24.8%	48.4%	55.4%	44.2%	17.6%	8.7%	35.9%	59.8%
1991	22,332	24.1%	46.1%	53.5%	42.1%	16.7%	7.1%	39.4%	NA
1992	21,776	23.8%	46.6%	NA	41.7%	15.4%	NA	NA	NA
Total	140,192	25.6%	48.4%	55.8%	43.2%	17.3%	8.6%	35.6%	61.5%

[1] Freshman class includes new freshmen students entering in the fall or preceding summer. These students represent 94 percent of freshmen students.

[2] Degree may have been awarded by any Illinois public university.

[3] Length of time varies from 10 years for the class of 1987 to seven years for the class of 1990.

Source: Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System

Table 2

Graduation and Persistence of Black Students in Public Universities' 1987 to 1992 Freshmen Classes

Freshman Class[1]		Bachelor's Degree Awarded[2] by the End of			Continuing After			No Degree & Not Enrolled	Graduated
Year	Number	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	After 6 Years	Eventually[3]
1987	2,632	6.2%	20.1%	28.2%	47.5%	30.2%	18.8%	53.0%	38.0%
1988	2,601	8.0%	23.0%	30.8%	48.9%	29.1%	17.7%	51.5%	40.1%
1989	2,904	6.6%	21.0%	30.2%	49.4%	29.9%	17.1%	52.7%	38.8%
1990	3,130	6.6%	21.8%	29.7%	46.8%	27.4%	15.6%	54.7%	36.8%
1991	3,215	6.1%	18.8%	27.3%	43.0%	25.8%	13.1%	59.6%	NA
1992	3,163	4.9%	18.8%	NA	41.3%	22.3%	NA	NA	NA
Total	17,645	6.4%	20.5%	29.2%	45.9%	27.3%	16.3%	54.5%	38.4%

[1] Freshman class includes new freshmen students entering in the fall or preceding summer. These students represent 94 percent of freshmen students.

[2] Degree may have been awarded by any Illinois public university.

[3] Length of time varies from 10 years for the class of 1987 to seven years for the class of 1990.

Source: Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System

Table 3

Graduation and Persistence of Hispanic Students in Public Universities' 1987 to 1992 Freshmen Classes

Freshman Class[1]		Bachelor's Degree Awarded[2] by the End of			Continuing After			No Degree & Not Enrolled	Graduated
Year	Number	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	After 6 Years	Eventually[3]
1987	966	13.3%	31.4%	38.3%	47.8%	26.0%	16.0%	45.7%	47.3%
1988	1,062	14.1%	31.3%	39.9%	49.3%	28.2%	16.9%	43.2%	49.4%
1989	1,137	13.5%	30.9%	40.7%	50.5%	28.1%	15.6%	43.7%	48.6%
1990	1,250	10.3%	31.3%	38.9%	49.9%	25.4%	13.9%	47.2%	45.5%
1991	1,396	9.5%	27.8%	36.3%	48.1%	25.4%	13.8%	49.9%	N.A
1992	1,530	9.7%	27.5%	N.A	46.9%	23.6%	N.A	N.A	N.A
Total	7,341	11.4%	29.8%	38.7%	48.7%	25.9%	15.1%	46.2%	47.7%

[1] Freshman class includes new freshmen students entering in the fall or preceding summer. These students represent 94 percent of freshmen students.

[2] Degree may have been awarded by any Illinois public university.

[3] Length of time varies from 10 years for the class of 1987 to seven years for the class of 1990.

Source: Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System

Table 4

Pathways and Time to Degree
Public University Bachelor's Degree Graduates
Fiscal Year 1998

	Means on Selected Variables		
	All Students	Six Years or Less	More than Six Years
All Paths			
Number of Students	28,217	24,480	3,737
Average Number of...			
Community Colleges Attended	0.85	0.83	1.01
Community Colleges Majors	1.05	1.02	1.28
Universities Attended	1.11	1.07	1.38
University Majors	1.79	1.69	2.48
Terms Enrolled	11.84	11.23	15.82
Community College to University			
Number of Students	11,750	10,690	1,060
Average Number of...			
Community Colleges Attended	1.33	1.30	1.59
Community Colleges Majors	1.78	1.73	2.26
Universities Attended	1.09	1.06	1.38
University Majors	1.56	1.48	2.33
Terms Enrolled	13.74	13.25	18.69

	Means on Selected Variables		
	All Students	Six Years or Less	More than Six Years
Universities Only			
Number of Students	9,487	8,284	1,203
Average Number of...			
Community Colleges Attended	0.00	0	0
Community Colleges Majors	0.00	0	0
Universities Attended	1.07	1.05	1.21
University Majors	1.83	1.76	2.34
Terms Enrolled	9.13	8.64	12.54
University to Community College to University			
Number of Students	6,898	5,439	1,459
Average Number of...			
Community Colleges Attended	1.22	1.17	1.41
Community Colleges Majors	1.26	1.16	1.62
Universities Attended	1.21	1.13	1.53
University Majors	2.15	2.01	2.69
Terms Enrolled	12.32	11.22	16.43

Notes: The number of college or university majors is a count of the number of different CIPS codes. The number of community colleges and universities attended includes re-enrolling in an institution previously attended. Concurrent enrollment in two institutions counts as two terms enrolled. Some enrollment activity may occur outside the shared data system.

Source: Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System

Table 5

Change in Graduation and Persistence Rates Among Public Universities' 1987 to 1992 Freshmen Classes
(sorted by long term graduation rate)

Freshmen Classes[1]	Graduated by End of 6th Year			Continuing After Sixth Year			No Degree & Not Enrolled	Graduated
	Class of 1987	Class of 1992	Change	Class of 1987	Class of 1992	Change	After 6 Years	Eventually[2]
U of I at Urbana-Champaign	82.8%	79.5%	-3.3%	5.0%	3.6%	-1.4%	14.6%	84.3%
Eastern Illinois	63.3%	65.0%	1.7%	7.0%	5.0%	-2.0%	28.9%	68.5%
Illinois State	59.8%	58.3%	-1.5%	8.3%	6.2%	-2.1%	32.8%	64.8%
Northern Illinois	57.6%	52.2%	-5.4%	7.3%	6.2%	-1.1%	37.2%	61.1%
Western Illinois	49.4%	49.2%	-0.2%	8.3%	5.2%	-3.1%	41.6%	55.9%
SIU at Carbondale	47.2%	39.4%	-7.8%	12.7%	7.6%	-5.1%	44.8%	52.2%
U of I at Chicago	37.5%	34.0%	-3.5%	13.7%	10.8%	-2.9%	49.3%	46.1%
SIU at Edwardsville	36.9%	29.5%	-7.4%	15.8%	11.7%	-4.1%	50.0%	44.6%
Northeastern Illinois	15.9%	13.5%	-2.4%	20.1%	17.5%	-2.6%	65.0%	25.0%
Chicago State	13.5%	11.3%	-2.2%	20.3%	17.3%	-3.0%	67.1%	22.4%
Total	56.4%	53.5%	-2.9%	9.4%	7.1%	-2.3%	35.6%	61.5%

[1] Freshman class includes new freshmen students entering in the fall or preceding summer. These students represent 94 percent of freshmen students.

[2] Length of time varies from 10 years for the class of 1987 to seven years for the class of 1992.

Source: Shared Enrollment and Graduation Information System

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